

Redevelopment Agency Meeting

Friday, March 14, 2014

Regular Meeting

1. / Roll Call

Present:

Douglas T. Brown, Chair

Steven M. Thibault, Vice Chair

David Lahousse, Member

Jeanne Budnick, Member

Also Present:

Joel D. Mathews, Acting Director of Planning & Development

Priscilla T. Steenbergen, Recording Secretary

Jennifer Siciliano, City Planner

N. David Bouley

Absent:

Paul D. Gould, Esq., Member (Present before meeting called to order, excused himself for prior commitment)

Steven J. Lima, Member

Michelle Martineau, Member

Meeting called to order at 8:16 AM.

2. / Introduction and Comments from Douglas Brown

These meeting are Open Meetings and must adhere to policies of Secretary of State for filings of meetings. He noted that City Councilman Garrett Mancieri was in attendance today. Also he mentioned that automated notifications could be set up with Secretary of State for meetings in our City as well as others.

3. / Comments from Joel D. Mathews, Acting Director of Planning and Development

Suggestions for the Woonsocket Redevelopment Agency

1- Regarding the scattered blight in the City and working with the Administration and the Building Inspection Division, The Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket is the only body that has the power to take a property by Eminent Domain should the need arise after all other attempts have been exhausted.

2 – The Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket could be used to develop underutilized areas of the City, such as Cumberland Hill Road. It could take the lead role in forming the area into a light

commercial zone.

3 – The Agency could also reactivate discussion for the use of a MED Zone, drawing big ticket item distributors to the City, perhaps in the Barry Field area. Currently, the City Solicitor is reviewing the covenants of the deed to see if the City can lease the property from the Education Department and money be used for Woonsocket children. Another possibility could be the use of Eminent Domain by RAW.

4. / Appointment of an (Acting) Executive Director

Discussion by members and others in attendance regarding the Executive Director position has been held historically, by position or individual.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Steven Thibault, seconded by Mr. David Lahousse, to table the decision to the next meeting. Motion unanimously approved.

5. / Selection of Legal Counsel

Discussion noted that Mr. Pierre Rondeau was previous Legal Counsel for the Agency. Mr. Douglas Brown considered if his

charges were noted in previous minutes. Mr. David Lahousse noted that invoices were approved but amounts not noted. Mr. Joel Mathews commented that Mr. Rondeau charges have been minimal, including travel and time at .10/hour; he also has good availability.

Ms. Jennifer Siciliano discussed being contacted by Attorney Zack Darrow, who expressed an interest in the position. He is Special Counsel to Fall River and Providence and has created tax stabilization in Fall River. He has experience with Eminent Domain cases, encourages developers to come to City's utilizing a stacked tax structure. He does not charge for travel expenses and charges \$200/hour for his services.

Member discussion if position needs to go out for advertisement. Also there was discussion of Conflicts of Interest in using Mr. Pierre Rondeau. It was noted that any Members who had paid Mr. Pierre Rondeau would recuse themselves from voting to continue with utilizing Mr. Rondeau's services.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Steven Thibault, seconded by Mr. David Lahousse, to continue utilizing Mr. Rondeau's services until an RFP solicitation can be held. Motion unanimously approved.

6. / Presentation of Proposed Scattered Sites Redevelopment Plan by N. David Bouley

At the request of Mayor Baldelli-Hunt and Mr. Joel Mathews, Mr. N. David Bouley drafted a Scattered Site Redevelopment Plan. It outlines a plan for surgically select sites that could be addressed by the Agency if Code Enforcement is unable to act or accomplish demolition or rehabilitation of targeted properties. The Agency could take over with private or federal funds. Potential grants or CDBG funding could also be used to fix utilities and sidewalks and also address limited off-street parking.

The proposed areas consisted of “Dirty Thirty” properties and one area of Main Street identified by Ms. Jennifer Siciliano, City Planner. Mr. Joel Mathews commented that there could have been more or less areas and asked the Members to review the Plan over the next few weeks. He also advised Members that they could identify properties to Mr. Bouley to consider for inclusion. Mr. Bouley will send out Plan copies to Members not present.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Jeanne Budnick, seconded by Mr. Steven Thibault, to receive Scattered Site Redevelopment Plan and place on file for further discussion. Motion unanimously approved

7. / Discussion

Meeting days and times were discussed. A decision was made for meetings to be held on Tuesdays at 8:15 AM in the second-floor

conference room. The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 8, 2014.

To be placed on the Agenda:

- 1 – Review and Alteration of Scattered Site Plan
- 2 – Legal Counsel RFP Review
- 3 – Officers will be selected if another election necessary
- 4 – Renaming of the Redevelopment Agency of Woonsocket to be the Woonsocket Redevelopment Agency

Mr. Douglas Brown noted that Members were subject to all Open Meetings rules set forth by the Secretary of State. He also noted that Members were required to comply/file reports with the Ethics Commission. Form copies will be supplied next meeting.

Mr. David Lahousse inquired to status of minutes from last meeting held in 2013. Those will be acquired for April 8 meeting.

8. / Adjournment

There being no further business before the regular meeting of the Agency, the Agency adjourned at 9:12 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla T. Steenbergen

Recording Secretary